

17<sup>th</sup> October 2008

## Press Information - Press Information

### Defending jobs in Hewlett Packard-EDS merger

On 15<sup>th</sup> October 2008, trade union and EWC representatives from HP and EDS met in Brussels to discuss the 9,330 lay offs announced in the wake of the take-over of EDS by HP. (This meeting followed the trade union coordination meeting held under the auspices of EMF and UNI-Europa on 9 September and the Extraordinary EWC meeting on 25 September.)

The participants underlined the shock felt by the workforce in the various countries concerned given that the size of the job cuts far exceeded any 'worst scenario' expectations they may have had. In EDS this means one out of four workplaces is threatened.

Participants also underlined the fact that the plan announced on 25 September was not based on any sound analysis of the economic situation of the combined group nor did it take its future potential into account. In their view the plan was only geared towards the financial markets and unfortunately will not be conducive to the constructive climate which is necessary for the successful integration of the two groups.

The trade unions' opinion is that the European management failed to inform and consult the European Works Councils on 25 September. EWC representatives were presented with a fait accompli. They had no opportunity to influence the plan on the basis of their own expertise prior to the decision being taken.

For EMF and UNI-Europa, this is not in line with the spirit of the EWC Directive. They will use the HP/EDS case to underline the need to strengthen information and consultation rights in the current EWC Directive revision process.

EMF and UNI-Europa call on HP/EDS management:

- to ensure that it meets its obligations to provide full information and proper consultation with the trade union/employee representative bodies both at European and national levels. It has failed to do this so far at European level.
- to recognise the employees' right to bargain collectively and enter into negotiations on the social consequences of their planned decision.
- not to proceed with any compulsory redundancies/layoffs.
- to provide a detailed plan for redeployment and re-skilling of the existing workforce in order to fill current and anticipated skills shortages as an alternative to redundancies in this reorganisation.
- to create the conditions for the establishment of a new EWC which will capitalize on the best practices of each EWC agreement.

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## Press Release

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The trade unions will not accept that HP and EDS merge in order to downsize. They want the new combined company to say where and how it will grow and how this will benefit its employees.

Against this background, they have decided to hold a European Action Day to call on management to revise its plan. On that day, EMF and UNI-Europa affiliates in countries where HP and EDS have operations will undertake local/national actions to demonstrate their solidarity with a view to safeguarding jobs and securing a sustainable future for their companies.

Protest actions will already be launched shortly in some countries, prior to the European Action Day. EMF and UNI-Europa will communicate further details in due course.

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The EMF is the representative body defending the interests of workers in the European metal industry. The EMF has a mandate for the external representation and coordination of the metalworkers' unions and a mandate to engage in bargaining at European level.

UNI-Europa is the European trade union organisation for skills and services.

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